

Minnesota. I thank my colleague for introducing this resolution during Catholic Schools Week 2006.

Catholic Schools Week is an annual national celebration of the important role that Catholic elementary and secondary schools across the country play in providing quality education for American youth. The mission of these institutions—to build solid foundations for lives of confidence, faith, and service—has had a tremendous impact in shaping family values and community life across the country, and particularly in my community in Western New York.

In my hometown, neighborhoods are often known by the names of their Catholic Schools and Parishes, and the many families that are active in Catholic schools are enriched by the values they espouse. Indeed, I have spent my life as a first-hand witness to the beneficial work of Catholic schools. My mother was a teacher at Our Lady of Perpetual Help, and my two children, John and Maeve, are enrolled at St. Martin of Tours Catholic School in South Buffalo. My family and I are personally grateful for the contributions that America's Catholic schools have been making to families like ours, and American society at large, for more than four centuries.

Today, more than 7,700 Catholic schools and 160,000 Catholic school teachers nationwide are making valuable contributions to education and are playing an integral role in shaping a brighter, stronger future for our nation. Together, they will teach 2.4 million students, an astounding 99 percent of which will graduate and 97 percent of those graduates will go on to college. As these students become adults, their intelligence and character will benefit communities in Western New York and throughout the nation.

I thank the National Catholic Educational Association and the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops for cosponsoring this week-long event and for helping to increase awareness for Catholic education across this great country.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to join with my colleagues in supporting this resolution, and I thank my colleague Mr. KENNEDY for his leadership on this issue.

STEPHEN AND MARY PETRILLA:
GET WELL SOON

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 7, 2006

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor two very special people while offering my prayers and warmest wishes for their quick return to full health.

Stephen and Mary Petrilla are 50 year residents of Hamilton Township—the largest municipality in my congressional district in central New Jersey. As teachers, parents and local residents, they live quiet but influential lives, earning the respect and devotion of their students, neighbors, and fellow parishioners at Saints Peter and Paul Parish in Trenton, New Jersey. Their family and friends are inspired by their faith, kindness and commitment to helping others.

Mr. Stephen Petrilla is a veteran of the United States Army and was injured while

serving his country in the line of duty. He is a member of the American Legion, the DAV and the Elks.

For nearly 75 years, Mr. Petrilla dedicated his life to the field of education, helping children in either a teaching or administrative capacity. A former administrator for two training schools in New Jersey, his expertise and passion focused on special education, helping children with mental retardation and working to ensure that State and local governments did more to meet the needs of our precious children who face special challenges.

Mr. Petrilla organized and directed shelter workshops for challenged children across the State and later worked as a special education teacher in Lawrence Township and at Sister Georgine's Learning Center in Trenton. His inspiring commitment to helping children has been recognized through various honors including being named a Fellow in the American Association of Mental Deficiency and being featured in various Who's Who publications including Who's Who in the East, 1979, and Who's Who in Child Development Professionals, 1976.

Mrs. Mary Petrilla has been a constant source of love and support for her husband and her children, while also distinguishing herself in the teaching profession. After receiving her bachelor of arts degree at St. Joseph's, Mrs. Petrilla began working as a teacher eventually advancing her way to become one of the first female elementary school principals in the Pennsbury School District. She also taught adult education classes in Trenton while serving as a private tutor. For 20 years, Mrs. Petrilla served as a home instructor for Ewing Township Schools, helping children with illnesses who were physically or medically unable to go to school. She also served as a supplemental teacher for "English as a Second Language" and Basic Skills Instructor until her retirement in 1994.

Lots of children have benefited from the hard work, commitment, love and compassion the Petrillas each exuded on the job, in their careers in education. And it is important to note, that that same love, generosity, empathy, nurturing and mentoring was and remains a hallmark of the Petrilla home. They are the proud parents of five children and eight grandchildren and their family feels abundantly blessed. They have shared with me inspiring stories that truly capture their parent's extraordinary example of reaching out and helping others throughout their lives.

We join with their family and friends in thanking the Petrillas for dedicating themselves to successfully helping our community, and we offer our continued prayers for their comfort and full recovery.

INTRODUCTION OF THE PRESCRIPTION DRUG SAFETY AND AFFORDABILITY ACT

HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 7, 2006

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce legislation that will bring some sanity back to prescription drug marketing, and help bring down the astronomical costs of prescription drugs. The Prescription Drug Safety and

Affordability Act will force manufacturers to educate physicians instead of spending billions of dollars wining and dining them.

As Congress begins to investigate its own ethics, we should also shed some light on the immoral relationships between the pharmaceutical industry and physicians. Golf trips and lavish meals aren't just for Members of Congress. Though its hard to imagine, physicians may actually get more lobbying perks from the drug industry than Members of Congress do.

For far too long, the pharmaceutical industry has jeopardized patient safety and inflated prescription drug prices by using tax-deductible dollars to underwrite their so-called "physician education" efforts. According to a recent report in the Journal of the American Medical Association, JAMA, there is a clear conflict of interest when doctors become too cozy with pharmaceutical companies.

Drug companies annually spend about \$10,000 on every single physician in the United States trying to entice doctors to prescribe their drugs. That adds up to nearly \$8 billion in annual spending by drug companies marketing their products to physicians. It is not unusual for doctors to receive lavish meals, all expense paid "educational" trips to posh resorts, and lucrative consulting deals from pharmaceutical manufacturers. Every single dollar spent on these unnecessary gifts is tax deductible for the drug industry as a general business expense.

The Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America, PhRMA, pretended to discourage these improper marketing ploys by issuing conflict-of-interest guidelines in April 2002. After announcing the guidelines with fanfare, they then paid the American Medical Association to "educate" their members on these guidelines—that is, they gave doctors financial incentives to promote ethical guidelines that called for an end to financial incentives! It is obvious that PhRMA is not serious about ending the practice of giving financial incentives to doctors.

Regardless of what PhRMA may say, the marketing tactics are still working. It is clear from the JAMA study that self-policing won't work. "Although physician groups, manufacturers, and the federal government have instituted self-regulation of marketing . . . current controls will not satisfactorily protect the interests of patients."

Doctors swayed to prescribe a certain drug because of their financial ties to drug companies put their own personal interest above the health and safety of their patients.

This must stop now. My legislation will curb unnecessary spending physician gifts to the benefit of all patients.

The Prescription Drug Safety and Affordability Act is a simple way to ensure pharmaceutical companies' behavior matches their rhetoric. This bill eliminates the tax-deduction that pharmaceutical companies currently receive for spending on physician gifts. The bill specifically exempts free drug samples, as that is often the only means by which uninsured patients can get medications.

Unnecessary physician gifts from the drug industry unduly influence prescribing, increase drug prices and corporate profits, and endanger patients who get the wrong prescriptions for the wrong reasons. By removing incentives for pharmaceutical companies to lavish gifts of dubious public value on physicians, I hope